

U.S. Serial No.: 10/629,978
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Group Art Unit: 3739
Examiner: Peter J. Vrettakos
Arty. Docket No.: 22956-234

REMARKS

The pending Office Action addresses and rejects claims 38-40, 42-57, and 68-73.

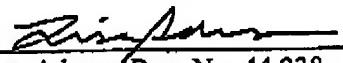
At the outset, Applicants thank Examiner Vrettakos for extending the courtesy of a telephone interview to Lisa Adams and William Geary on January 26, 2006. During the interview, agreement was reached that all claims are now in condition for allowance.

Independent claim 38 is amended to clarify that the radial channel extends through the head. Support for this amendment can be found throughout the specification, for example at page 7, lines 5-19. Independent claims 47, 49, 52, and 57 are amended to clarify that the two components are held together solely by interference fit when a filament is disposed therebetween. Support for this amendment can be found throughout the specification, for example at page 6, lines 8-9. Independent claim 72 is amended to recite that the suture extends through the cavity, forms a loop segment, and passes back through the cavity. Support for this amendment can be found throughout the specification, for example at page 7, lines 5-19. No new matter is added.

As indicated above, during a telephone interview with the Examiner on January 26, 2006, agreement was reached that the pending claims distinguish over the prior art of record, and that all claims are now in condition for allowance. Accordingly, all pending rejections have been overcome and allowance of the pending claims is respectfully requested. The Examiner is encouraged to telephone the undersigned attorney for Applicants if such communication is deemed to expedite prosecution of this application.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: January 26, 2006


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